

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

2

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Canceled) A vehicle steering or guidance system,
comprising a route marker,
disposed along, or in proximity to, a prescribed route,
and responsive to interrogation by a vehicle mounted transducer,
to provide vehicle route guidance and steering direction.

2. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with a route marker configured to respond to interrogation
by, say, relay of route and/or traffic data.

3. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with a route marker configured as a continuous element,
such as a cable, (flat) rail, strip, tape or band.

4. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

3

with a route marker configured as multiple discrete elements,
laid in succession and mutually juxtaposed in relation to one another,
and one or more prescribed routes.

5. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with a combination of continuous and discrete route markers.

6. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with one or more notional continuous route pathways,
defined by multiple discrete pathway markers or marker beacons.

7. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
wherein individual markers comprise radio frequency (RF) identification (ID) tags,
with integral flash memory chips for read/write data storage.

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

4

8. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
wherein markers supplement, or are integrated within,
otherwise conventional reflective optical markers, such as 'cats-eyes'.

9. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with route markers configured as magnetised identification tags,
with a localised 'field of influence',
allowing coding, by say polarisation, to reflect travel direction.

10. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with route markers disposed in a mutually staggered array,
that is with a lateral offset to straddle a notional route centre line reference.

11. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with multiple individual route markers configured for collective response,
in groups or cells defining a common sphere of influence.

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

5

12. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with multiple individual route marker disposition and frequency
reflecting route complexity and convolution,
with, additional markers at tight route curvature or bends.

13. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with a default minimum, of say, 3/4 discrete route markers, in close proximity,
imposed for a collective position fix,
with an on-board vehicle arbitrator to mediate therebetween.

14. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
wherein route marker functionality includes some or all of:

a) pre-program by passage of a reference vehicle over the route;

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

6

- b) record vehicle ID and time of passage - accessible to later traffic for collision avoidance and transit history;
- c) interrogation facility for accident investigation;
- d) interrogation for productivity / performance assessment and maintenance regime;
- e) service as wayside beacons with bolstered transmit radiation mode;
- f) selective grouping for route banding and multiple routing.

15. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
configured with backup redundancy,
through multiple independent steering systems.

16. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
with a facility for triggering emergency vehicle braking,

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

7

upon steering system failure.

17. (Canceled) An automated vehicle steering system,
comprising a primary module (10),
referring to a physical reference line (30),
or multiple discrete route markers (66);
and a secondary module (20),
referring to an independent reference store (18),
expressed as a sequential instruction table,
configured as an emergency backup,
implemented upon failure of the primary module.

18. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
as claimed in Claim 1,
wherein a prescribed route (50) is subdivided,
into sequential segments (36),
each accorded a respective steering instruction,
in relation to a preceding segment.

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

8

19. (Canceled) A vehicle steering or guidance system,
comprising
a vehicle mounted transducer,
configured to interrogate one or more route markers,
disposed along, or in proximity to, a prescribed route,
and responsive to marker reply to such interrogation,
by providing vehicle route guidance and steering direction,
to a steering actuator.

20. (Canceled) A vehicle steering system,
substantially as hereinbefore described,
with reference to, and as shown in, the accompanying drawings.

21. (Canceled) A vehicle incorporating a steering system,
as claimed in Claim 2.

22. (Canceled) An emergency combined steering and braking system, for a (road) vehicle,
using accumulated sequential pre-stored route data,
to determine current position and future steering action,

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

9

in order to follow a prescribed route,
and, in emergency circumstances, to trigger braking action,
consistent with vehicle route speed and onward route profile,
and thereby to bring the vehicle safely to a halt,
while preserving directional control,
and adherence to the prescribed route.

23. (New) A vehicle steering and braking system
for delineated route negotiation
in either
a normal mode using a primary system (10),
referring to a physical reference line (30)
comprising a submerged cable
and/or waypoint reference beacons;
or
an emergency backup mode
using a secondary steering system (20)
independent of the primary system
and referring to a reference store (18)
with a look-up table of sequential incremental steering instructions
implemented upon perceived primary system failure
recognized by an error bound departure from prescribed route adherence

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

10

along with controlled vehicle braking
for combined emergency steering and braking
to bring a vehicle safely to a halt
under directional control
within general route confines.

24. (New) The steering and braking system of Claim 23,
wherein a prescribed route (50) is subdivided,
into sequential segments (36),
each accorded a respective steering instruction,
in relation to a preceding segment.

25. (New) The steering and braking system of Claim 24,
configured for a road or rail vehicle such as a light tram,
using accumulated sequential pre-stored route data,
to determine current position and future steering action,
in order to follow a prescribed route,
and to trigger braking action,
consistent with vehicle route speed and onward route profile,
and thereby to bring the vehicle safely to a halt,

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

11

while preserving directional control,
and prescribed route adherence.

26. (New) A vehicle incorporating the steering system,
as claimed in Claim 25.

27. (New) An automated vehicle steering system,
selectively operable in dual independent primary and backup secondary modes,
to follow a prescribed route alternatively defined by
a continuous route delineator configured as an embedded cable,
a route look-up store of tabulated route segment co-ordinates and profiles,
a plurality of waypoint cross-reference beacons;

a primary steering system command module
connected to a detector for interacting with the cable
to sense and determine vehicle position in relation thereto;

a secondary steering system command module
connected to the look-up store,
with a beacon interrogation option for cross-reference;

Appl. Number 10/500,806 (Pemberton et al.) Amend. A contd.

12

an arbitrator for receiving steering commands
from primary or secondary steering system command modules
and determining a steering output
according to vehicle conformity to a prescribed route delineation;

a steering actuator coupled to a vehicle steering mechanism
and responsive to output from the arbitrator;

the secondary system being implemented by through the arbitrator
upon departure of the vehicle under the primary system
from prescribed route confines;

a brake actuator coupled to a vehicle braking system,
an emergency braking command module,
a coordinator module interlinking the secondary steering command module
and the emergency braking command module
whereby to co-ordinate combined emergency steering and braking action.